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Drought Task Force Meets with Central Coast on Drought Impacts, Response Efforts

Santa Cruz – On Friday, April 4, leaders of the Governor’s Drought Task Force met with local officials in Santa Cruz County to hear first-hand accounts and direct impacts of the current drought. City and county leaders, water managers and elected officials gathered at the Santa Cruz Police Department to hear directly from each of the Task Force Members – Cal OES Director Mark Ghilarducci; California Natural Resources Agency Secretary John Laird; California Department of Public Health Deputy Director Mark Starr and California Department of Food & Agriculture Undersecretary Sandra Schubert – on the actions the State Government can take to mitigate the impacts of the current drought.

“Our goal continues to be in front of this crisis,” said Mark Ghilarducci, Chair of the Governor’s Drought Task Force.

California is a very diverse state, and therefore every area has been affected differently. These meetings give the Governor’s Drought Task Force leaders an opportunity to speak with local officials on their unique issues about the drought while the State monitors the overall picture and the current impacts to agriculture, businesses, jobs, and the cost of commodities, like food and other supplies.

“We are going around the state to hear what’s going on in your communities and break down traditional ways to go about solutions,” said John Laird, Secretary – California Natural Resources Agency. “This drought is showing us that people are working together, and we’re never far from the people we work with.”

The 10-mile wide strip of Santa Cruz County that stretches between the coast and the crest of the Santa Cruz Mountains at the northern end of the Monterey Bay is a good example to the rest of the state that water does not share boundaries. In the scarcity of water, the people of Santa Cruz have been actively involved in water conservation efforts and sharing good practices.

“It was impressive to hear from the community about the steps they are taking to address water supply issues related to the drought. CDPH is happy to be part of the solution and to continue to help tackle ongoing drought related drinking water concerns,” said Mark Starr, CDPH deputy director.

The task force reminded attendees to continue to communicate their specific problems as the year progresses, so state leaders can engage with emergency networks, leverage both levels of government and collaborate for solutions.

“This meeting was very successful, we heard specific issues, so we know what kind of actions we need to take,” said Sandra Schubert, Undersecretary of the Department of Food and Agriculture.

Even with the recent storms, we continue to have one of the driest years in the history of California. Water conservation is the most cost-effective and environmentally sound way to reduce demand for water.

For the latest actions by the state and the Drought Task Force, follow us on [Twitter](#)!